



Back issues of this publication are available on our website: cdhd.idaho.gov

Central District Health Department

Medical Reserve Corps

In This Issue:

September Is National Preparedness Month

National MRC News

Regional MRC News

Inside PHP

Thank You

West Nile Virus Returns

We Want To Hear From You

A Look Ahead

September Is National Preparedness Month

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has announced that more than 1,200 national, regional, state and local agencies and organizations have pledged their support and joined the 2008 National Preparedness Month Coalition. Sponsored by the department's "Ready" campaign, National Preparedness Month helps to educate, raise awareness, and promote action by Americans and their communities in the area of emergency preparedness.



"As we approach our fifth National Preparedness Month, I want to thank the hundreds of coalition members who are making a difference in their communities by helping to raise the basic level of preparedness in our country," said Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff. "Individual preparedness is the cornerstone of emergency preparedness. Experience shows that if Americans take steps ahead of time, they stand a much better chance of coming through an emergency unharmed and recovering more quickly."

How do you rank?

The American Red Cross (ARC) recently released new data on citizen preparedness based on research conducted by Wirthlin Worldwide.

The survey, sponsored by the ARC, found that only two in ten Americans felt "very prepared" for a catastrophic event; only about one third of the parents polled knew the disaster plans of their child's school or daycare; the number of people familiar with the disaster plan at their workplace was approximately 47%; and the number of people who said that they have a family emergency plan that includes a meeting location if they were evacuated, along with emergency contact numbers, has plummeted over the past year to below 17%. In fact, according to the study, less than 1 in 10 American households have a family emergency plan, disaster supply kit, along with training in first aid and CPR.

It's important to point out that this survey was done *after* recent devastating events such as Hurricane Katrina. We know that catastrophic events such as those are going to happen from time to time. Occasionally, our rivers flood, the funnel clouds touch-down, lightening strikes or the earth shakes. Time and again, we have seen the difference that being prepared can truly make to individuals, families and within our communities. Are you prepared?

To learn more about community preparedness efforts and what you can do to be better prepared, go to www.ready.gov, our website at www.cdhd.idaho.gov, or contact your local emergency management office. In Ada County call 577-4750 or go to www.accem.org. In Elmore County, call 587-3370 x229. In Valley County, call 382-3200 and in Boise County, call 392-4411.

We're A Tobacco Free Zone



To protect the health of **everyone** at CDHD, no smoking or other tobacco use is permitted in our facilities or on our property, both indoors and out.

Thank you for your cooperation.



707 N. Armstrong Pl.
Boise, ID 83704-0825
Tel. (208) 327-7499
Fax (208) 327-7100

Kimberly Link
Program Manager
Office of Public Health Preparedness
(208) 327-8589
klink@cdhd.idaho.gov

Mary Barlow-Brusse
Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator
(208) 321-2215
mbbrusse@cdhd.idaho.gov

Randy McLeland
Planner
(208) 327-8514
rmclelan@cdhd.idaho.gov

George Pinque
ASPR Healthcare Liaison
(208) 580-6014
gpinque@cdhd.idaho.gov

Olga Copley
Administrative Assistant
(208) 327-8589
ocopley@cdhd.idaho.gov

Kathryn Quinn
Health Education Specialist
(208) 327-8597
kquinn@cdhd.idaho.gov

National MRC News

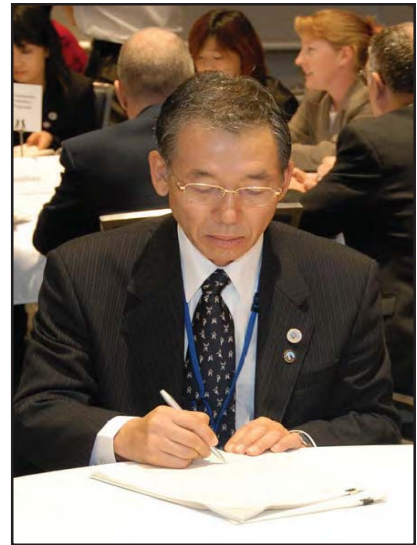
Forging International Partnerships: Japanese Delegates Travel Around the Globe to Learn About the MRC

Delegates from the Japanese city of Myazaki traveled around the world to learn more about its sister city's disaster volunteer programs. This unique opportunity allowed Virginia Beach MRC to highlight the successes of the MRC program.

"This meeting opened their eyes to the expectations they can have of their volunteers," said John Matte, Virginia Beach MRC unit leader.

The delegates requested to meet with the members of the MRC and other volunteer groups to gather more information with the hope of starting similar programs in their area.

Their interest in disaster response stemmed from recent typhoons and the country's lack of an organized volunteer response system.



Regional MRC News

California MRC Units Provide Relief to Wildfire Evacuees



Mother Nature's fury has been relentless over the past few months: floods, tornadoes, and most recently a little closer to home, wildfires.

Southern California has been devastated by numerous wildfires recently, destroying homes and forcing huge numbers of residents to evacuate. The MRC from San Bernardino County was activated to help care for more than 1,000 evacuees. In one week, 50 MRC volunteers worked multiple shifts to provide round-the-clock assistance. Their work played an important role in reducing the number of evacuees requiring care in the local hospital emergency departments.

"This experience was phenomenal to me as a volunteer, and it easily justified the time I spent preparing as an MRC volunteer," said Dr. Frank Randolph, MRC Executive Committee member. At the field clinic they helped set up, volunteers cared for 10-20 evacuees per hour, both young and old. Evacuees presented

with a range of medical conditions including minor injuries, respiratory ailments caused by the smoke, and even a pregnant evacuee in labor.

Although not activated to provide direct patient care, neighboring Beach Cities Health District MRC was able to play a role in helping with the wildfire relief efforts by assisting with a collection drive. Organized in partnership with the American Red Cross and Goodwill Industries, more than 200 volunteers, including 15 MRC volunteers, collected enough household items in 5 days at 3 sites to fill 14 moving trucks. Additionally, \$20,000 was raised for the American Red Cross relief efforts.

Inside PHP - CDHD's Public Health Preparedness Program

In an effort to enhance our working relationship with our MRC volunteers, we would like to take this opportunity to turn the spotlight on the specific program within the health department of which MRC is a part – the Office of Public Health Preparedness (PHP).

The Office of Public Health Preparedness at Central District Health Department (CDHD) is charged with planning for, responding to, and recovering from, public health emergencies within our region - Ada, Boise, Elmore and Valley counties. We do this through training and education, planning, drills and exercises, and volunteer coordination. Each part plays a significant role in our community's level of preparedness for any public health emergency:

Training and Education

Training and education play a vital role in preparing for public health emergencies and disasters. Our short and long-term efforts are to provide preparedness education and training; identify needs and educational resources for public health employees, medical professionals and the general public.

While education and training programs are being developed in-house by our program's Health Educator, training is also being provided by a variety of other agencies. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Idaho State University - Institute of Emergency Management, and the Northwest Center for Public Health Practice are just a few of the expert organizations providing training resources to enhance our ability to respond.

Another key element to our education and training program is our charter to educate the medical community on public health practices. Syndromic surveillance, disease identification, and management of public health emergencies require a cohesive and coordinated response from all quadrants of the medical community. Cooperative education and training will allow for this type of response.

FEMA and the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) offer self-paced courses designed for people who have emergency management responsibilities and the general public. All are offered free-of-charge. To get a complete listing of courses available through FEMA – Independent Study Programs, go to: <http://training.fema.gov/IS/crslist.asp>

There are a number of valuable training and educational opportunities found locally and available to MRC members. Many of them can be found through the Idaho Learning Management System (LMS) at www.idahoprepares.com. If you would like more information about the LMS or any of the classes available locally, please contact our Health Educator, Kathryn Quinn at 327-8597 or e-mail her at KQuinn@cdhd.idaho.gov.

Planning

The Office of Public Health Preparedness (PHP) at Central District Health Department (CDHD) has been assigned the task of developing and maintaining CDHD's Emergency Response Plan (ERP). This plan details CDHD's response strategy to natural or manmade disaster, communicable disease outbreak, or other public health emergency.

It is essential in our planning for us to work with the four counties in our district along with other agencies. CDHD maintains a close working relationship with the emergency managers/disaster coordinators in each county and coordinates planning through groups such as Local Emergency Planning Committees. We take every opportunity to train and exercise our plans both on our own and along with other emergency response agencies.

One of the planning activities that we are currently focusing on is the Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI). Across the US, health departments in large urban areas are responsible for developing, training and exercising plans to distribute vaccine or medications to the residents of the area within a 48 hour period in the event of a large public health disaster. Our area includes the cities of Boise and Nampa and we coordinate our CRI planning with Southwest District Health (Health District 3).

While we continue to develop and enhance our preparedness and exercise activities within our local communities, our plan is designed to complement the emergency response plans of governing state agencies such as Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security (IBHS) and Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (IDHW). For more information regarding public health planning or exercise activities, contact Randy McLeland, CDHD Planner, at 327-8514 or rmclelan@cdhd.idaho.gov

Planning Through Hospital Liaison

As part of the PHP planning function, we include the coordination of a Regional Health Care System Planning Group. The group's primary purpose is to improve the preparedness and response capabilities of various health care entities within our region.

This coordination effort is managed at CDHD by a District Liaison. The Liaison is responsible for the coordination of various health care entities within the communities of Ada, Boise, Elmore, and Valley counties in the formation of a Regional Health Care System Planning Group, the development of planning documents, and the oversight of grant funds used for regional healthcare preparedness.

Recently, grant funding allowed the group to purchase three 25-bed mobile medical treatment facilities. These mobile hospitals are able to serve as full treatment hospitals if needed or can be used for medical support in large-scale events within local areas. One of these mobile facilities was used in February for the Special Olympics Invitational Games and all three of the units will be used during the Special Olympics Winter World Games taking place in February of 2009.

For more information about CDHD's coordination with local healthcare facilities, contact George Pinque at 580-6014 or GPinque@cdhd.idaho.gov.

THANK YOU!

We would like to thank those of you that recently volunteered your time to assist with our additional Direct Observation Therapy (DOT) caseload.

Currently, the health department is assisting and monitoring 4 cases of Tuberculosis (TB) within our region. The patients are receiving treatment after being released to "home care." However, regulations mandate that the health department directly observe them taking their medications each day for the next six weeks - or what's called "Direct Observation Therapy."

Our Communicable Disease staff really appreciated having the assistance of the great volunteers who have been helping with this important, but time-consuming task. Each DOT involves picking up the patient's medication at CDHD, delivering it to the patient, observing them taking the medication, and recording information about the visit.

A big thank you goes out to the MRC volunteers below who took time out of their busy schedule to lend a helping hand to CDHD and their community:

William Loomé
Susan Brandon

Betsy Moynihan
Thomas Sutherland



West Nile Virus Returns

As of August 15th the state of Idaho had 12 confirmed human cases of West Nile virus, and positive mosquito pools had been found in six Idaho counties, including Ada and Elmore counties in the Central District Health Department area of jurisdiction.

West Nile virus (WNV) is a disease that is transmitted to people, birds and other animals by the bite of an infected mosquito. This virus can cause serious illness in people of any age, but especially in people over the age of 50 or those with other underlying medical conditions.

The key to preventing infection is to avoid getting bitten by the mosquitoes carrying the disease. You can protect yourself from West Nile virus by following these simple rules:

DRAIN any standing water on your property that may produce mosquitoes.
DAWN and DUSK are times for people to avoid the outdoors.
DRESS appropriately by wearing long sleeves and pants when outdoors.
DEFEND yourself against mosquitoes by using an insect repellent (follow label directions).
DOOR and window screens should be in good condition to prevent mosquitoes from entering your home.

Locally-acquired mosquito-borne human infections were first recorded in Idaho in 2004. In 2006, Idaho led the nation in reports of human illness associated with WNV with 996 cases being reported to the state health department. Twenty-three of those people died.

For about 80% of the people bitten by infected mosquitoes, the symptoms are mild and may even go unnoticed. Approximately 20% of infections result in West Nile fever, which is characterized by fever, headache, body aches, swollen lymph nodes and occasionally a skin rash.

Less than one percent of cases result in the most serious form, which includes swelling of the brain and a host of associated problems: headaches, high fever, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, muscle weakness, paralysis, and in some cases, death – as was sadly the case with twenty-three Idahoans in 2006.

To learn more about West Nile virus and how to protect yourself and your family, visit www.westnile.idaho.gov or call the West Nile Hotline 1-877-333-WNVI (9681) or if within the Treasure Valley, 208-334-6500.



We Want to Hear From You

This is YOUR newsletter! We want your help in making it as interesting and useful as possible for our MRC members – just like you. We want to know what you'd like to see, read, and learn more about. Please share your ideas, news, and suggestions with us. E-mail Mary at mbbrusse@cdhd.idaho.gov or call 321-2215.



Central District Health Department
Communicable Disease Control & Public Health Preparedness
707 N. Armstrong Pl.
Boise, ID 83704-0825

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 1
BOISE, ID

A Look Ahead

Keep an eye on this section for a schedule of quarterly meetings, upcoming volunteer opportunities, response exercises, and other public health events!

Member Contact Information – The majority of our communications with you is done via e-mail. It has proven to be a great way to get information out to a large group of people easily and quickly. We realize however that e-mail addresses change often and become easily outdated. If you have recently changed your e-mail address, or have perhaps noticed that you haven't heard from us in a while, please give us a call or shoot us an e-mail with your current contact information. We want to stay in-touch!

Please contact Mary at 321-2215 or mbbrusse@cdhd.idaho.gov . - Thanks!

CERT - Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is a free, 16 hour course designed to teach the basic response skills that may be necessary by each of us in the event of a major disaster. The curriculum for this course assumes that help is hours, to days, away and covers basic skills such as: basic fire suppression, basic search & rescue, disaster medical operations, disaster psychology, team organization, and terrorism threat awareness. For more information about CERT training in Ada County, contact Paul "Crash" Marusich, Ada County Emergency Management, at 577-4750. Outside of Ada County, contact Robert Feeley, with Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security (BHS) at rfeeley@bhs.idaho.gov, or 422-3033, to find CERT training in your area.